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'Heber Creeper' Excursion Train Hauls 26,000 in Its First Year

By SHIRLEY CHATWIN

HEBER — Creation of the "Heber Creeper" scenic railroad has proved with its first year of operation to be a tourist asset in Utah and Wasatch Counties as well as boosting the economy in these areas.

The steam railroad operated from July 10 to Oct. 17, completing a total of 113 runs. Some 26,000 paying customers flocked to the depot to ride the antique steam engine, producing \$66,500 in revenues, according to Lowe Ashton Jr. president of the Wasatch Mountain Railway Company.

28 Employed

Twenty-eight people were employed by the tourist venture. Twenty-one of those employed were under 21 years of age. This has been an especially welcome employment for college students who were seeking summer work, Mr. Ashton said.

In announcing plans for the 1972 season, Mr. Ashton said operation will begin on May 27 and continue on a daily basis except Tuesdays through Labor Day. Following Labor Day the train will run only on weekends until Oct. 9.

Charters Scheduled

The company plans in normal years to have the train operating for charter runs during April and May, especially for school excursions. "We may not be able to make this service available this year due to extensive work planned on the tracks, bridges, etc.," Mr. Ashton said.

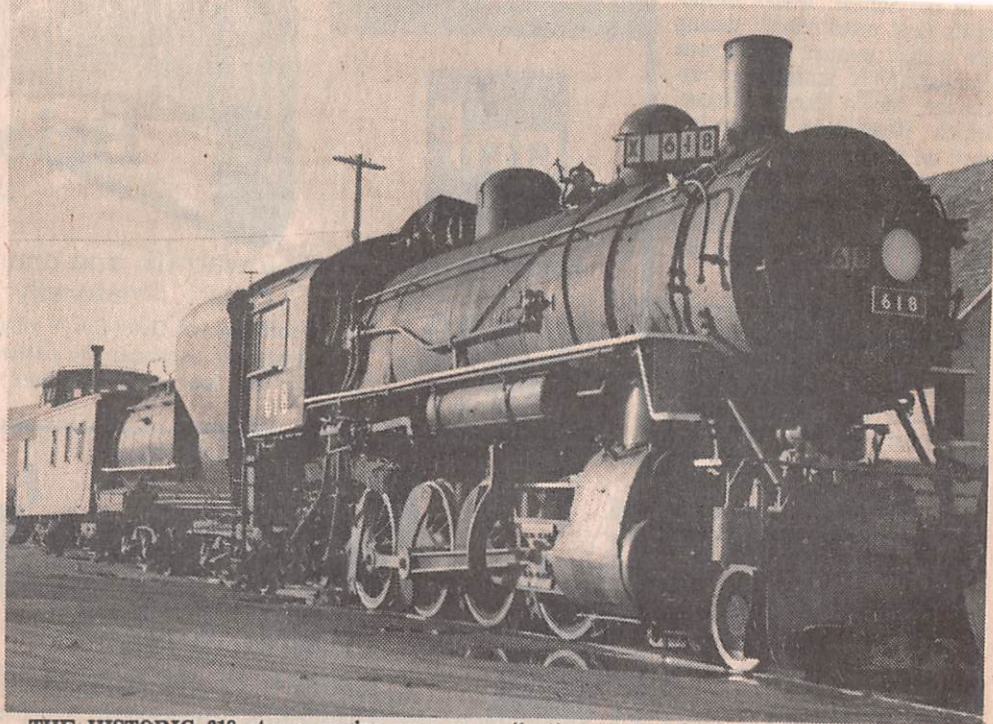
Enhancing the facility this year will be a "roving Resort." The company is in the process of purchasing two Union Pacific dining cars to be used for serving meals and snacks.

The railway company has received a certificate from Utah Pacific Service Commission authorizing it to operate the "Heber Creeper" as a recreational, sightseeing operation between Heber City

and Bridal Veil Falls in Utah County.

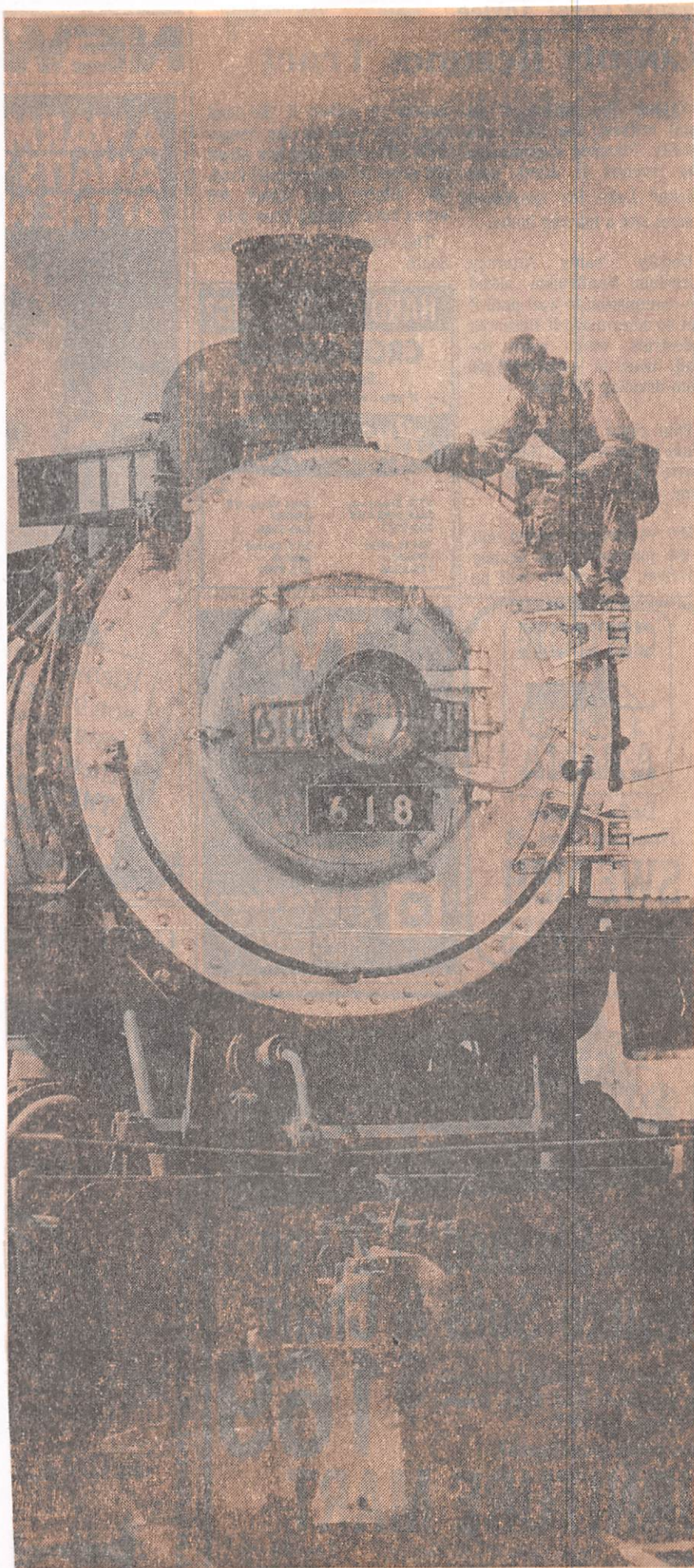
It was ordered that the firm "render reasonably adequate and continuous (except for seasonal suspension) service to the public."

The corporation acquired existing railroad tracks and right-of-way from the Denver & Rio Grande Western Railroad, which had been abandoned several years ago.



THE HISTORIC 618 steam engine was an attraction to the tourists helping to make the first year of operation of the scenic railway a success. Nowadays the steam engine is an

"antique" which brings on the nostalgia of the older generation as well as the excitable curiosity of the young.



Old 618 Rides Again

Mark Whiting, 19, fireman-engineer on Heber Creeper,

readies a 1912 steam locomotive for Heber to Bridal Veil Falls.

